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REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1-12, 38-41, and 46 of the subject application are respectfully requested.

First Rejection Under 35 USC 103

Claims 1-5, 7-9, 38-41, and 46 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over US 6,139,675 to Druecke et al. (Druecke) in view of US 5,885,909 to Rudisill et al. (Rudisill). The Examiner maintains the rejection for reasons of record and offers further argument that Druecke's teaching of heating the composite to a range between 33 and 40°C renders obvious the claimed range of curing at 15 to 30°C. The Examiner bases the conclusion on the use of similar materials in Druecke and in the subject claims. However, currently amended claims 1 and 38 recite that the adhesive composition is non-crosslinkable, whereas the adhesive disclosed in Druecke is crosslinkable. Support for the non-crosslinkable adhesive composition is found at page 13, line 9 and at page 18, line 34 of the specification. This would obviate the rejection based on obviousness.

As previously noted, Rudisill does not cure the deficiency as to Druecke in view of the amendments above.

The Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness and it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

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Second Rejection Under 35 USC 103

Claims 1-5, 7-12, 38-39, and 46 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over US 5,415,925 to Austin et al. (Austin) in view of US 4,588,457 to Crenshaw et al. (Crenshaw) and US 5,681,645 to Strack et al (Strack).

The Examiner maintains the rejection for reasons of record admitting that, Austin does not suggest a water-based adhesive. However, the Examiner offers Crenshaw for teaching water-based adhesives. As noted previously, Crenshaw is directed to adhering a spunbond sheet to a tissue ply and as such, would provide no motivation to use the water-based adhesive in Austin. Further, the Examiner concludes that the use of similar materials in Crenshaw and in the subject claims would render the recited curing temperature obvious. However, Crenshaw clearly does not disclose or suggest curing the adhesive in the range of about 15 to 30°C as recited in the subject claims. Crenshaw discloses at column 8, lines 16-19 that the fabric is heated to cure and dry the latex binder, noting that the temperature is kept below 160°C to avoid deformation of the spunbond web. The phrase "below 160°C" would not be construed to include temperatures as low as 15 to 30°C, based on the disclosure in Example 1 at column 12 lines 34-36 where the drying rolls were at a temperature of 150°C.

The Examiner offers Strack as teaching that the claimed spunbond fiber has an average diameter no greater than about 8 microns, however the disclosure of Strack fails to cure the deficiencies of Austin and Crenshaw.

The Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness and it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Third Rejection Under 35 USC 103

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Druecke and Rudisill, as applied to claim 1 and further in view of US 5,010,165 to Pruett al. (Pruett).

Pruett fails to overcome the deficiencies presented above as to Druecke and Rudisill; therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Fourth Rejection Under 35 USC 103

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Austin, Strack and Crenshaw as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Pruett.

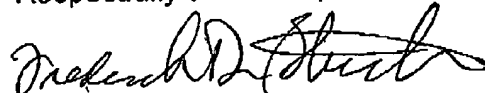
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Pruett fails to overcome the deficiencies presented above as to Austin, Strack and Crenshaw, therefore it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, allowance of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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